India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Lord Welby's Commission, which held a meeting on Wednesday last, has, we understand, made considerable progress in the consideration of the draft report. The draft was, it is stated, completed about three weeks ago. It remains to be seen whether its interpretation of the evidence and its recommendations will satisfy all the members of the Royal Commission. A rumour is current that a minority report is likely to be drawn up, especially as the evidence of the Indian witnesses is said to have been merely ignored in Lord Welby's draft.

What is known as the "Barh Whipping Case" has just been the subject of a judgment in the High Court, which must have been extremely unpleasant for Mr. Foster, Sub-Divisional Officer at Barh, who had sentenced two men to imprisonment and a third to fifteen stripes on a charge of abstracting documents from his office. Mr. Foster, on reflection, admitted that the proceedings were void, and the judges held that he had been led astray by excess of zeal, but they added:—

> The result was deplorable. A summary trial was forthwith held upon inadequate materials, before a judge who was himself a principal witness, and without allowing the accused time to consider their defence, non-appealable sentences were passed, including a sentence of stripes which were inflicted and cannot be revoked. . . . . We set aside the conviction of all three petitioners.

The Lieutenant-Governor has removed Mr. Foster from Barh, placed him under the direct control of the District Magistrate, and divested him of his whipping power, by which the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* thinks Sir John Woodburn and Mr. Bolton "have laid the country under deep obligation." It adds:—

> Those who think that the prestige of the Civil Service is hurt if an erring member of it is punished are very much mistaken. The punishment awarded to Mr. Foster has enhanced, and not lowered, the prestige of Government.

It is an inevitable effect of the Rangoon outrage that the Indian public should put the worst construction on the conduct of British soldiers whenever there is room for suspicion. The *Gujarati* reports a case from Ahmedabad which should clearly be made the subject of a close investigation. Here is the story. On September 22 last, a soldier entered a house near the Delhi Gate, on the ground floor of which lived a poor Mahometan family. Three other soldiers stood by the door. The head of the family was at his shop hard by, but his wife was within; however, when he heard of the soldiers' visit, he hastened back. He was beaten and his arm dislocated; his wife received a blow on the head which rendered her insensible; and her young brother, a boy of ten, was also injured. In the end, as the crowd thickened, the soldiers ran off, one of them dropping his cap. It is said that a complaint was filed before the commanding officer and the soldiers identified. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* suggests that the soldiers were really seeking a woman of doubtful character who lived on an upper floor; and if this be so, it gives a greater air of probability to a story that is otherwise scarcely credible. But the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* adds another item less credible still—that the authorities made no enquiries for a fortnight after the occurrence. We hope there is no truth in this, and that the matter is being enquired into with the greatest care.

Mr. Rivaz introduced in the Viceroy's Legislative Council on October 13 two Bills to amend the laws regulating coolie emigration to Assam. He had little difficulty in showing that legislation was required. He said:—

> There is overwhelming evidence that under the guise of "free emigration" from districts which supply labour to Assam, an organised system of professional recruiting has grown up which is not distinguishable from the professional recruiting recognised, licensed, and controlled by the Act, save that it is entirely free from control and resorts with impunity to fraud, kidnapping, abduction of women, and other malpractices.

Referring to the coolies who were enlisted under this system, he went on to say:—

> When the labour districts are reached the emigrant is far from home, amid unfamiliar surroundings and has practically no option but to accept the contract which he is called upon to sign.

Mr. Rivaz then gave a history of the legislation carried or attempted on the subject and a brief summary of the changes proposed. He ended as he had begun by declaring that though the Government accepted the present system based on "penal contract enforceable through the Criminal Courts," they looked upon this as "exceptional and transitory" and still hoped that the day would come when they could "dispense with all special legislation" relating to recruitment of labour for Assam.

As to the provisions of the new Bills, the second only extends the Bengal Act of 1889, which regulates the conditions of transport to Assam and is known as the "Inland Emigrants Health Act," to the whole of British India. The first Bill, which is much the more important, makes many changes in the law. All recruiting is to be subject to the new Act. Emigrants are to be registered before a responsible officer in the district in which they have been recruited, and the contract is to be entered into either in the district or in some central place near. Three days must elapse between registration and the execution of the contract. Labourers must be sent home if they have been recruited by fraud or violence, or rejected by the registration officer. A woman can only enter into a penal contract with the consent of her husband or guardian. Contractors' coolies must be medically examined. A labourer convicted of desertion cannot be detained in custody or at the garden beyond the last day of his contract. The minimum contract wage is raised from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per month for a man and from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 for a woman. It is this provision which will probably give rise to most opposition from the planters. The *Englishman*—whose excellent report we have followed throughout—raises its voice in protest on this point, but on this point alone.

We have now before us the text of Lord Curzon's speech in Council (October 20) on the famine, which, he well said, had been "threatening this sorely-tried country and its patient and unmurmuring population for months past." The Viceroy mentioned "some grounds of legitimate alleviation" of the ill fortune impending: (1) "facts that have warned us of the coming scarcity," and in consequence of which "we have been able to formulate our plan of campaign in advance;" and (2) the considerably smaller aggregate of areas of distress as compared with 1896-97, which "should enable us to devote our energies to their relief with all the greater concentration." There can therefore be no future question whether or not the Government was forewarned. The methods of procedure,

of course, were already laid down in the Famine Code brought up to date on all the previous experiences of famine. The recorded observations of a century "will furnish the pocket-book for field service with which our soldiers of peace will enter upon their humane and bloodless campaign."

Lord Curzon summarised "the action which it is in the power of the Government of India to take against famine in respect either of executive intervention, sympathetic assistance, or local control." Thus:—

In our territories we have a fourfold scheme of operation: in larger villages and towns we open poorhouses for the reception and sustenance of famishing waifs and strays; in country hamlets we distribute gratuitous relief, weekly or fortnightly, to the sick and aged widow and orphan; we employ tens of thousands of impoverished but willing hands upon relief works, making roads, digging tanks, and constructing embankments for future lines of railway; . . . . should the emergency arise, finally, for the appointment of special officers selected for their training or experience we can supplement the existing staff, and endeavour both to supply a stimulus and to strengthen local supervision.

Such are the more immediate measures. In prospect also are taccavi advances to enable the rayat to sow his seed for the next rains, and remissions of land revenue. Lord Curzon claimed for the Government a standing generosity on these points, although there are not a few who regard the "generosity" as often rather backward. As to the Native States:—

Here we must be careful to do nothing that would diminish the responsibility or slacken the energies of the Native Chiefs and Durbars. The Government of India should not step in either to usurp their proper functions or to relieve them of an obligatory duty. On the other hand we may do much . . . . by the loan of officers, and by the offer of expert advice to systematise and to co-ordinate local action. We can further help the Native States with loans from the Imperial Exchequer; . . . . and we may by individual acts of assistance or relief contribute to lessen the strain.

Lord Curzon further referred to the charitable duty of local gentlemen, and we are glad to learn that the appeal has met—as it was sure to meet—with a liberal response.

Those who look upon all Native States with contempt will not find much support in the annual review of what even the *Times of India* calls "the progressive and enlightened administration of Mysore." After enumerating several examples of the good work which is being done in that country, our contemporary concludes thus:—

Lastly, there is the Agricultural Bank, in starting which the Durbar has shown an enterprise which we could well have wished had been also found beyond their border. . . . . However, there is the fact that Mysore has undertaken an experiment which the Bombay Government would have undertaken long ago if the obstructive hand of the India Office had not been placed upon it, and that already rayats owning immoveable property of the value of over half a crore have pledged their united credit in the undertaking.

Not long ago Mr. (now Sir) William Lee-Warner said that from these States "in course of time we may obtain here and there an example worth following." In the face of such facts as the above, does not Sir William Lee-Warner's guarded encomium seem almost insolent? But it is one thing to obtain an example worth following and another to follow it. How much longer is Bombay to wait for the establishment of Agricultural Banks?

Though the great famine naturally increased the number of alienations of land in the Punjab, only about half the mortgages during the last three years were to professional usurers, the others being to zemindars. To the *Pioneer* these figures suggest two things, "both very gratifying"—first, that mortgaged holdings do not always pass away from the cultivating to the trading classes and, secondly, that while some cultivators have been in great want of money, "others have been able to accumulate a financial surplus." Our contemporary calls for fuller details in future reports. Sir Mackworth Young believes:—

It may safely be said that the agriculturist prefers to sell to a brother agriculturist, and that he will only mortgage to the money-lender when in his grasp.

The *Madras Standard* observes that "the peasantry everywhere in the country are sinking into a dangerous state of depression, and will soon become, unless adequate measures are promptly taken for their relief, a source of serious economical and political evil." The observation is made in reference to the Punjab Land Alienation Bill, and the grounds of it are but too painfully solid. But our contemporary unhappily applies only a very oblique criticism. Thus:—

It may be pointed out that public experience of land legislation in the past on lines different from orthodox economical science is not by any means so satisfactory as to warrant further legislation on heterodox lines. Lord Curzon has no regard for the high priests of Free Trade shrines, and while his predecessors have hesitated to rush where these priests have feared to tread, Lord Curzon has chosen to drive a coach and four. We can only wait to see the consequences.

True enough, so far as it goes; but why not enforce the principle in detail? The writer's reason is an extraordinary one enough:

When distinguished statesmen and experienced administrators prescribe remedies for the agrarian maladies of the country, the voices of humbler critics must be silent. Nor will an unofficial dissent from the decision of the Government be anything but a cry in the wilderness.

The *Madras Standard* must really pluck up its ancient courage. This self-effacement will never do.

Our Madras contemporary strikes a firmer note on the employment of Indian troops in the South African campaign. It justly objects to the saddling of India with any part of the expenses involved, ordinary or extraordinary, and insists that the transaction should be regarded simply as an ordinary business loan. The Government has already decided to bear all the expenses. It could not very well help itself, for, as the *Madras Standard* puts the point, "India has about as little interest in the war against the Boers as Great Britain had in the war of the United States in the Philippines." But our contemporary goes further—as we ourselves have already done—and demands "that the Indian Government should be indemnified against all losses that may accrue to it through the war, not only in the immediate present, but also in the future." That is to say, India must not be charged with any additions to the pension list that may result from the hostilities. Nobody, except Lord George Hamilton, can discern any Indian interest in the war that can justly be adopted as a ground for placing on the Indian Treasury a single pie of the expenses immediate or remote.

Those who chatter about the rampant sedition of the Indians should be interested in the complaint of the *Indu-Prakash*, which asks "who it is who was responsible for gratuitously depriving India of the proper share she would gladly have taken in the glorious task of maintaining the dignity of the empire and the prestige of its arms, so wantonly called in question by the over-weening Boers." Our contemporary feels the slight bitterly. It says:—

The distrust, or deliberate slight, that has thus been evinced against the brave and ever-loyal Jack Sepoy is an entirely novel departure in Anglo-Indian politics, and it is a departure scarcely calculated to cement those ties of love and loyalty which it should ever be the endeavour of statesmen to strengthen. From all the colonies and dependencies of England have gone forth contingents to share the glory of upholding the honour of the Empire in the land of the Boers. The Queen's Indian subjects alone are excluded, and excluded without any present cause or past precedent to justify so unstatesmanlike a surrender to race prejudice as the exclusion unmistakably exhibits . . . . Those who remember the enthusiasm with which Indian Princes and chiefs gladly offered personal help to fight the Queen's battles in Afghanistan cannot but deplore that, by the determination not to send Native troops to Africa, a valuable opportunity has been lost of strengthening the newly-born feeling which made Indians consider themselves to be an integral portion of the great British Empire, bound together by unity of hopes, aspirations, and interests.

For our part we think Indians are well out of the hateful business, but we cannot but point to this outburst as a genuine indication of how far Indian feeling has advanced beyond the ignorant notions of India's very superior rulers, and how urgent it is for the British public to recognise the policy of turning it into profitable channels.

Lord Curzon has set a good example to those Europeans who clamour for the enforcement of plague measures against all Indians without exception, but carefully avoid submitting to them themselves; who prate about the duty of educated Indians to sacrifice themselves for the public good and show the more ignorant the virtue of submission, while they themselves go free. The Viceroy, unlike those who cry up the value of inoculation, but refuse to avail themselves of their own remedy, was inoculated before leaving Simla on his visit to some of the plague-stricken districts.

Though the Durbar held by Lord Sandhurst at Belgaum is said to have been thinly attended, it perhaps made up for this, in his opinion, by the praise which was lavished on all those who had been engaged in plague prevention. His Excellency, according to the *Mahratta*, made one gratifying announcement—that if the municipality would show that their resources were crippled on account of plague expenditure, the Government would give consideration to their request for another grant, in addition to the Rs. 13,000 given before the outbreak of the third epidemic. Inside there was unanimity of praise; but outside, as Lord Sandhurst drove back with the Commissioner, the carriage suddenly stopped. The road was blocked by a mass of prostrate bodies. It was the Jains, who had been turned out of their huts, and who had now come to present a petition to the Governor. Not being able to speak English, they had to be satisfied with a few broken sentences in writing. Lord Sandhurst took the petition, and the carriage drove on. Outside his bungalow, the Jains waited in vain for an answer, till hunger and the fierce heat drove them away.

The Bombay Government unfortunately rejected the prayer of a memorial from some two thousand citizens of Poona, requesting the alteration or abrogation of certain routine plague measures and the substitution of other measures which had proved thoroughly satisfactory elsewhere. The refusal has caused much heartburning, for the objectionable measures have not succeeded in staying the plague, while they have proved extremely harassing to the people. "The fact is," says the *Indu-Prakash*, "our plague policy has become official-ridden: vested interests have grown along with its development, from whose evil influence Government now finds it difficult to free itself." This, our contemporary believes, rightly or wrongly, to be "the real secret"; and whether it be right or wrong, it is a most unhappy result that such an idea should be implanted in intelligent and loyal minds. "What we want," says the *Indu-Prakash*, "is a man at the head, with a will of his own, energy to enforce his will, and the courage to act up to his convictions." Just so. The difficulty is to get that man. Colonel Creagh was such a man, and at Bombay General Gatacre was another. Now, apparently, all the strength of will oozes out between the advisers of Lord Sandhurst and the responsible official on the spot. The Bombay administration is evidently in much need of rehabilitation, on the side of plague measures, at any rate at Poona.

Last week we quoted a letter and an article from the *Times of India* protesting strongly against the importation of plague nurses from England. Not that there is any intention of disparaging either the capacity or the devotedness of the English nurses; but on account of the unnecessary expense, and the displacement of Anglo-Indian, Eurasian, and Native nurses, who have already acted with efficiency during the past three years on one-third of the rate of pay given to the new-comers, and who have the supreme advantage of being able to speak in the language of the patients, and of being familiar with their ways. It is not easy to understand the principle of this astonishing policy. The *Times of India* illustrates and enforces its correspondent's protest by citing the case of the nurses of St. George's Hospital. These ladies were the pioneers of plague nursing in Bombay, "when the hospitals for plague patients were in a state of chaos," and "when plague nursing had all the appearance of being a dangerous as well as an uncommonly arduous task." Having thus earned the gratitude of the public as well as special experience, they are now supplanted by "ladies who know nothing of the special and local requirements of their work." Equally incomprehensible is a like importation of young doctors at like fancy prices. "The Medical Department," says another correspondent of the *Times of India*, "completely ignored, has had to give way entirely to Subalterns and Civil Servants already overburdened with legitimate duties, both of which classes are obviously round men in square holes." That may be the explanation. But then it is for the Bombay Government to explain the explanation.

The last-mentioned correspondent, who appears to understand what he is writing about, asserts that "all through the several chapters of this terrible scourge there has been the most pitiable mismanagement." One can well believe it when one is told that the Government has shelved the doctors and put civilians in command. The correspondent makes some nice calculations, as well as pungent criticisms. Thus:—

	Rs.
The return passages of say 50 nurses, at £60	45,000
Twelve months' salaries of 50 nurses, at Rs. 190	1,14,000
Return passages of 30 doctors	27,000
Twelve months' salaries at Rs. 800	2,88,000
Accommodation, transport, and miscellaneous expenses	25,000
Total	4,99.000

Thus for the three years as per agreement these nurses and doctors will cost the Bombay Government about thirteen lakhs!

For this vast outlay we have foisted upon us people who are absolutely ignorant of the plague, the country, the peoples, and the vernaculars; and, if reports which are current are correct, quite a number of the nurses are physically unfitted for any real hard work in India.

The writer quotes the salaries of capable Indian nurses at "the starvation salary of Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per mensem," and says there are dozens of them to be found in each Presidency ready to work for Rs. 100 per mensem. Efficient doctors also are available in the country at half the salaries of the newcomers. So between nurses and doctors, and salaries and passages, the writer works out an easy saving of Rs. 6,66,000 on the three years! Again, we say, it is for the Bombay Government to explain.

The *Indu-Prakash*, dealing with the crisis in the Bombay cotton-mill industry, strongly advocates the plan of running short time in order to relieve the existing strain. It enumerates a variety of adverse forces: "an inordinate jealousy and distrust of each other among the mill-owners;" "a general disposition" to give excessive weight to "the disadvantage of letting the machinery and buildings remain idle and the interest charges on borrowed capital swell up for nothing;" "the danger of the hands getting dissatisfied, of the disposition towards strikes and combinations getting stronger;" the higher salaries running on all the same; and the probable benefitting of the Japanese and Chinese mills at the cost of the Bombay mills. Most potent of all, according to the *Indu-Prakash*—indeed, "a much stronger impediment than probably all the others put together"—is "the pernicious commission agency system, under which our mill industry has been groaning for years." The *Indu-Prakash* asks if it is "impossible for Government to put an end by special legislation to the iniquity the system involves." Well, that raises far-reaching questions as to the efficacy of legislation, which need not be considered now. The whole speculation on which the adverse forces are arrayed has been settled against them, since the *Indu-Prakash* wrote. But it seems worth while to ponder them in view of contingencies, for they open out complexities and difficulties that are overlooked while the mill wheels go round quietly and steadily in ordinary times.

It is a common complaint in England that the boys who are taught trades in reformatories seldom keep to them when they get out into the world; and, as anyone acquainted with Indian life might expect, the same is true of India in an even greater degree. It appears from the *Pioneer* that out of seven reformatories only one could show a majority of those discharged during the year 1898 who followed the trade taught them, and in this case it was only a bare majority, 32 out of 63. In the six others, out of 492 boys only 65 are making any use of the trade taught them. It must be remembered that agriculture is the natural occupation of most of these boys, and it is now proposed to introduce a less rigid system into the plans for teaching trades. This is warmly approved by the *Pioneer*, which says:—

In other words the scheme will be adapted to the individual instead of the individual to the scheme. There is nothing radically unsound in the idea of putting naughty boys into one end of the machine and turning out honest artisans at the other end; but such a machine requires to be worked with the highest intelligence and with a deep knowledge not only of human nature but of Indian village life.

We are glad to hear that Professor Max Müller is decidedly better. He has been suffering from a bad attack of jaundice, and recovery at his age must be slow. But the complications feared by the German doctors have not arisen, and we learn that he is now distinctly improving.

LORD LANSDOWNE'S DEFENCE.

THOSE who compare the resources of Australia and of India may have wondered why so small a contingent has been accepted from the one for the campaign in South Africa while so many regiments have been withdrawn from the other—not indeed troops raised in India, but nevertheless part of the Indian army, commonly paid by India and popularly supposed to be necessary for the protection of that country. So obviously was some explanation necessary that it is not surprising to find the Marquis of Lansdowne offering a kind of defence on the occasion of the Cutlers' Feast at Sheffield. The Secretary of State for War declared :—

> We had excellent reasons for appealing to India. India is in the first place a week nearer to Natal than we are, and her battalions and regiments are, as you know, constantly maintained on a war footing.

As to India being nearer than England to the seat of war, that is a fact, nor is it possible to deny that the circumstances of the case were urgent. No doubt before Mr. Chamberlain is again allowed to negotiate a war, his colleagues will see that an army is on the spot. His diplomacy will only begin when a force suitable to his high-handed methods is in readiness. Had Lord Lansdowne rested his defence on the crisis into which Mr. Chamberlain had precipitated the country, on the instant danger before which all considerations of equity or of prudence had for the moment to be laid aside, his speech might have been passed over, or noticed only as a confession of the difficulties in which the Government had become involved. But there are two other points in the short passage quoted above which require some comment.

Lord Lansdowne talks of "appealing to India." To whom was that appeal made? To the Government of that country, represented in England by the Secretary of State for India, a colleague of Lord Lansdowne, and a member of the Cabinet that made the "appeal," and represented in India by the Governor-General, but lately appointed to that high post by the present Ministry, of which he had been till then a member. To hear Lord Lansdowne speak, it might be thought that the "appeal" had been made to some independent authority closely in touch with the people of India, speaking with their voice, and jealous before everything of their interests. We have heard of the time when Lord Eldon sat alone in the House of Lords to dispose of appeals from the judgments of Lord Eldon in the Court of Chancery. Seriously, is not this "appeal" to India an appeal of very much the same kind?

Then we are reminded that the regiments and battalions in India are constantly maintained on a war footing. Yes, as Lord Lansdowne says, we know that they are so kept, and at a heavy price to India. But this has always hitherto been justified on the ground that such a force was necessary to defend the country against external or internal foes. No one has denied that it has been a terrible weight on the finances of India, but its necessity has been insisted on, however difficult it might be to raise the revenue required. Plague and famine might desolate the land, the civil government might be starved and debt accumulated, but the tale of soldiers must still be provided for. The Russian bogey beyond the North-West frontier demanded it. And, besides, was not India, so we were told, seething with disloyalty fanned by newspaper editors, Mahratta Brahmans, and other wicked persons, whom it was necessary to overawe by a great display of military force? There were some of us who thought these fears exaggerated, or even ridiculous. We did not believe that Russia could surmount the difficulties of the country that lies between the two frontiers; nor did we make the mistake of thinking that Indians whose position and importance were bound up with English rule, and who had no military aptitude or organisation, would ever rise in revolt; nor, again, did we confound an agitation for greater freedom under the British crown with disloyalty and sedition. But if these things were ever dangerous, if Russia should be ever tempted to establish herself on the Indian borders, or make a spring at India itself, if the discontent engendered by heavy taxation and insulting exclusions should ever tempt the Indians to rise in insurrection, it would surely be when England was already embarked in another war, and the flower of her army was on its way to a distant part of the world. If Russia is really biding her time to invade India, it would be for such a crisis that she is waiting; and though the invincible loyalty of the Indians will be proof against any such temptation, it is only when England is engaged elsewhere that the hottest rebel could hope for even a momentary success. Yet this is the very moment chosen by the British Government to remove troops from India. If these regiments are not wanted now, then we may be sure that they never have been wanted for the last twenty years, and all that has been expended in maintaining them—on a war footing, too, as we are asked to remember—has been money drawn without necessity from the poverty of India. The famine-stricken peasant paying in Sind five shillings for three halfpence worth of salt, struggling under the heavy and growing land-tax has had his burdens increased that an army should be kept up which is now by the action of the Government admitted to have been far larger than is necessary. The *Pioneer* rejoices that by the removal of these troops to Africa, a considerable sum will be saved to India. But what of the sums that have been expended during the last twenty years on thus keeping up an unnecessary force? No Indian takes the field beside our British troops in Africa to share with them the dangers and the honours of their well-fought battles, but all the same we are carrying on the war with the flesh and blood of the Indian peasantry. It is by the poorest population under the British flag that these regiments have been supported, which are now found to be unnecessary for the purpose to which they have been devoted. The dilemma cannot be avoided. Either India has been denuded of her proper complement of troops in the hour of danger, or she has been made to pay for an army far larger than her needs. If the latter be the true answer, this injustice must never be inflicted on her again.

If no Indian troops are fighting in South Africa, the reason generally assigned and accepted has been that India's interests in that quarter are very remote and that, in spite of her poverty, she has already undergone many charges for what was really an Imperial purpose. But Lord Lansdowne finds a vital connexion between India and the present war. He said at Sheffield :—

> Nor should it be forgotten that India has a special interest in this Transvaal question. A considerable number of the Queen's Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and amongst the many misdeeds of the South African Republic, I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferers on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India when these poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?

Is Lord Lansdowne really ignorant that the Indians have to complain of their treatment in British colonies as well as in the Transvaal? Does he not know that New South Wales and West Australia, Rhodesia and Zululand discriminate against the Indians? Is he not aware that the grievances of the Indians in Natal are at least as heavy as those they suffer from in the South African Republic? In our issue of October 13, we gave some details of this hostile legislation in various colonies and especially in Natal, where the law against Indian immigration (under pretence of quarantine) is still a blot on the Statute-book. But the laws requiring passes and throwing difficulties in the way of Indian traders are even more obnoxious. The Indians of Johannesburg complained that they were not allowed to live and trade save in one inconvenient suburb. But in the towns of Natal they cannot trade at all without a licence issued by an officer appointed by the Town Council, and against whose decision there is no appeal. In many places, all licences have been refused. In some places Indian traders, long established, have been ruined by the withdrawal of their licences. With difficulty have men, whose all has been invested in shops or booths, obtained a year's grace to dispose of their property. The names of Newcastle, Dundee and Ladysmith, must be very familiar to the Secretary of State for War, and each of these places has distinguished itself by the harshness with which it has administered the Traders' Licence Law. It is bad to be forced to trade in one spot, as at Johannesburg; but it is surely worse to be forbidden to trade at all, as in many parts of the British colony of Natal.

When the Indian returns from Africa to his native land he will have other wrongs to tell of besides those inflicted in the Transvaal. He will have to tell of those he has endured at the hands, not of aliens, but of his own fellow-

subjects. He will have to tell how Indians were insulted at Durban when they assembled to show their loyalty at the unveiling of the statue of the Queen, and how the loyal people of that city tried to lynch an Indian who had been guilty of the crime of complaining in India of the treatment experienced by his fellow-countrymen in Natal. Lord Lansdowne says that not one of the misdeeds of the Boers fills him with more indignation than their treatment of the Indians. Yet those who compare the mild remonstrances of the Colonial Secretary in regard to these men with his insistence on the demands of the European Outlanders for the franchise, even at the risk of war, will see what a very different place the grievances of the latter had in his mind. But in any case we do not think that the Indian returning to his country will be much surprised that the South African Republic did not redress his wrongs. He will rather ask how it is that "the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress" at the hands of the small colony of Natal. He will ask with what face can the Government complain of the treatment of Indians in the South African Republic, when Indians are treated no better within the dominions of the Queen. And he will ask how long are his rights as a citizen of the Empire to be set at nought by one small colony. Is it ignorance or hypocrisy that makes Lord Lansdowne ignore these questions?

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAMINE.

LITTLE as we hear of the details of the famine in India, one thing at all events may safely be taken as sure and certain: it is steadily tightening its fatal grip upon the populations of the devoted districts. Last week a Bombay correspondent admitted, in his letter to us, that "hopes of rain have now been abandoned," and his "now" is but a few days short of a calendar month ago. It needs some experience of a famine-stricken community, as well as some imagination to realise the practical effects of the day-to-day tightening of the distress. We have still to lament the absence of anything like reassuring information from the afflicted territories. Such driblets of news as come over the wires to Government or to the newspapers are so vague as to be useless, and so confident as to induce a sense of doubt. Within the past week the chief prominence has been given to the statement that the Viceroy has visited the relief works here and there and has declared himself perfectly satisfied that the expenditure is being quite properly applied. The state of mind of the senders of such telegraphic news is amazing; it would be incredible but for the actual publication of the telegrams. As if, to be sure, the Viceroy would be shown anything that would not bear approval, or as if his opinion on the subject could be worth very much, even if we suppose it to be his very own opinion and not that of the local famine officer. No doubt the supposition is that the British public should take it for granted that the Famine Code, which is now perfect, is beyond their intelligence, and that the officials, who are also perfect, are administering it to perfection. We heard all this before, only two or three years ago; yet the records of the famine of 1896-97 forbid us to rely upon these easy assurances with any comfort. We want independent reports. And apparently we shall want them, as before, till too late.

There need be no doubt that the local officials are straining every nerve to do their very best for both man and beast, and that they are beneficently successful in staying the ravages of the famine. The point is that independent criticism would raise their efforts above their best, and ensure a larger measure of success. The Bombay correspondent, already cited, acknowledges that the experience of the last famine has rendered the Bombay Government more alert in the adoption of preliminary measures, and, we are especially glad to note, these measures "have, so far, received popular approval." The relief lists have now mounted up to more than 700,000. "In Central Provinces," Reuter reports (November 8), "rice crops are a practical failure; rain is urgently wanted, and distress is extending. Prospects bad in North Bombay, North Deccan, Rajputana, and parts of Central India. Prices are high everywhere"—of course. The main difficulty, so far as events had developed a month ago, appears to have lain in the preservation of the cattle, particularly in Gujerat and Kathiawar. As we have already said, it was very right of the Government to open the 70,000 acres of the Thana forests to the cattle of the rayats, and Mr. Lely, the Commissioner of the Northern Division, is reported to be indefatigably active in helping forward the transport, but surely there is solid reason in the contention of those that think the Government should advance the money necessary to pay the minimum railway rates. The public subscriptions in fifty places show an admirable spirit in the classes that are well-to-do, but it is incredible that the Bombay Government should leave the rayats to depend upon this slow and not absolutely sure method of relief. Already the mortality of cattle must have been frightful. But such a loss strikes so directly at the very roots of the prosperity of the country that the Government ought undoubtedly to have taken the straightest course to obviate it, relying on charity only in the second place. Some months ago we heard of arrangements for large imports of fodder. Where is that fodder now? We have not observed any reports of its arrival and distribution. In like manner we heard of grain pouring into the affected tracts from Bengal and Assam. Where is that grain now? We have learned nothing whatever of its distribution among the afflicted people. In fact, our own "Notes from Bombay" seem to throw vastly more light on the situation than all the other contributions in the correspondence of our English contemporaries.

Once more this visitation of famine calls insistently upon our legislators to take prompt steps towards some permanent remedy or palliative. With every wish to do justice to the foresight of the Government and its officials in making immediate provision for combating scarcity and famine, and to the energy of the local staffs in carrying out the necessary measures of alleviation, one must still come back to the sources of the mischief and enquire what the authorities are doing to reduce or abolish them. It ought to be unnecessary to acknowledge that the Government has no direct control of the monsoon. We accept the official protest that Government cannot make it rain when and where rain is needed. We are not sure, indeed, whether the Forest Department might not be able to assist the Government on this point, to some extent at least, but in the meantime we will not push that possibility beyond mere suggestion. Knowing, however, that famine is assuredly recurrent in cycles of more or less precise limitation; seeing that the last famine extended over an area unprecedentedly extensive; and finding the present famine breaking the cycle record and following on the very heels of the previous one—surely the authorities cannot too soon apply their minds to the larger and fundamental problem thus set sternly before them for solution. Hitherto they have been for the most part occupied with local considerations of a particular character, and mainly with a view to a particular strategy. So far, that was thoroughly right. It was right, for example, to build railways and to develop canals with a special view to the relief of this or that district. Years ago we were informed that now the railway system was so effectively expanded that it would be impossible for famine to fight another campaign. The anticipation has gone ignominiously to limbo. The reason, of course, is that the particulars have obscured the general view.

The essential thing is to strengthen the rayat to the point of effective resistance—to reinforce his vitality, physical and moral. He must be put in a position to withstand the pressure of exceptional scarcity until relief comes; and when the grain is brought to the nearest railway station he must be able to buy enough for the necessities of his household. Not even the Government will any longer dispute the awful poverty of the land. Sir William Hunter, who speaks by measure, has admitted that "forty millions go through life on insufficient food"—one Indian in seven. Sir Charles Elliott has gone further: "I do not hesitate to say that half of our agricultural population never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied." In certain parts of the country the official reports admit a distinct deterioration "within the period of British rule"; and a late head of the Agricultural Department in Madras did not scruple to say roundly that "the condition of the agricultural labourer in India is a disgrace to any country calling itself civilised." If but a bare half of these things be true, there is no ground for wonder that the agricultural population, which after all is the backbone of the

country, instantly collapses at the touch of famine. The best doctor in Harley Street can do little for a patient with a mere apology for a constitution, especially in a raging fever. The analogy holds but too firmly. The best Government in the world can do little for the rayats in famine unless it set itself very carefully and determinedly to render them prosperous, and so to build up a reasonably vigorous constitution. Do they not yet realise the significance of the awful fact that "in spite of the perfect internal peace which the British rule has established in India, in spite of its benevolent intentions, the great efforts and sacrifices made by it to afford relief during times of distress, three times as many people died of starvation in India during the famines of half-a-century (1833—78-79) as were killed in war over the whole civilised world in one century (1793-1877)"?

We have often pointed to fundamental measures of amelioration. First and foremost, the exorcism of the devil of military adventure, and the reduction of the military establishment, with the consequent saving on Home Charges. Again, the more liberal employment of Natives in better posts. Then, some more reasonable fixity in the land revenue demands: "if the proportion of produce to rent were fixed—if it were laid down once for all that each plot should pay yearly the money value, settled quinquennially on the basis of the preceding five years' local prices, of so many maunds of jowar, bajra, wheat, barley, cotton, sesamum, as the case might be, due reference being had to the culture prevalent in each village." Further, the establishment of agricultural banks in all important rural and urban centres, or at any rate a fair trial of the plan to begin with. More points might easily be added, but these would come in good time after the start of the others. With its savings from military enterprise, the Government would soon have money enough in hand for agricultural, technical, and general education, and for a large extension of public works in irrigation, drainage, embankments, etc. Above all, it is necessary to free the spirit of the masses, and to give them heart by convincing them that the Sircar is a helpful friend and not a terrible oppressor. The enemy is ignorance—ignorance of the needs of the people, ignorance of the spirit of the leaders of the people—an enemy to be extirpated at all hazards.

THE EMPEROR BÁBAR.[1]

IN Bábar, "the link between predatory hordes and imperial government, between Tamerlane and Akbar," Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole has one of the most attractive subjects in the whole range of Indian history. The subject, too, has been treated so admirably, first by Bábar himself in his memoirs, and afterwards by others, notably by Erskine in the first volume of his unfinished history of India, that the task of writing a brief sketch of his life and work must, from one point of view, have presented few difficulties. On the other hand, the fewer the difficulties, the smaller the triumph; and one cannot help feeling that Mr. Lane-Poole might have achieved a more interesting book if he had not been pursued throughout by the conviction that Bábar was his own best biographer. Bábar's memoirs have been praised in, perhaps, extravagant terms as "one of those priceless records which are for all time, fit to rank with the confessions of St. Augustine and Rousseau, and the memoirs of Gibbon and Newton." Such words raise the hopes of a reader very high, and those who embark upon this tiny volume in the expectation of finding so rare an intellectual treat will probably be disappointed by the quality of the extracts. By extracts, however, it is seldom possible to judge such writing fairly, and those who wish to do justice to the really great merits of Bábar's exciting and candid chronicle must read it in Erskine and Leyden's translation, or at least in the copious paraphrase embodied in Erskine's history.

Bábar owes his place in a series of "Rulers of India" to the great achievement of his later life. His earlier dreams of conquest had looked in another direction. Seated on the throne of the little kingdom of Farghana at the age of eleven, he cherished from the first the ambition to rule over Samarcand, like his great ancestor Timur. Three times he succeeded in winning the coveted prize, and as many times it slipped swiftly from his grasp. Exile and poverty and hairbreadth escapes alternated with his brief seasons of kingship. It is a moving story. One hardly knows whether to give the preference to the pages that tell of thrilling adventures or those that record, with a charming simplicity, his delight in prosperous city and peaceful plain. For, as Mr. Lane-Poole reminds his readers, the country beyond the Oxus was not "a desert dotted with ruins buried in sand." Samarkand was a city both beautiful and luxurious, the home of science and art. Farghana itself was "prodigal of fruit and laden with heavy harvests." At one of its cities grew such apricots and pomegranates that a man would journey from afar to taste them: after many years of exile, Bábar "recalled with a sigh the flavour of the dried apricots stuffed with almonds which were so good at Marghinan." Even more luscious were the melons of Akshi, "which had not their equal in the world, not even in the spreading melon fields of Bokhara." There is a delightful picture of Samarkand, its palaces and its pleasances, in which Bábar revelled for so brief a space. Equally interesting is the description of Kabul, to which Bábar turned his steps after he had reluctantly made up his mind that he must leave the Uzbecs in possession of Farghana. This resolve, taken in 1504, was the turning-point in his career: little as he knew it, he had set his feet upon "the immemorial road of conquest." He was accepted as king of Kabul. "From the time I conquered Kabul"—he wrote, 22 years later—"I had always been bent on subduing Hindustan." Mr. Lane-Poole thinks, however, that it was only after the failure of his third attempt upon Samarkand, in 1511, that he seriously thought of India. It was not till 1524 that he actually invaded that country. The great battle of Paniput, which gave him the kingdom of Delhi, was fought on April 21, 1526. He had to fight and win another great battle—Kanwala, March 16, 1527—before his throne was secure; and in the remaining two years of his life he had to fight both the Afghans and the Bengalese. He therefore accomplished little in the way of organisation. That task was left for his greater grandson, the famous Akbar. The story of his death is most touching, and reminds Mr. Lane-Poole of the great scene in the "Alcestis." Bábar's son, Humayun, was smitten with fever. It was thought that nothing could save him but some supreme sacrifice to God. Bábar resolved at once to offer his own life. In spite of the protests of his counsellors, who begged him to give any treasure rather than himself, he entered his son's chamber, and walked gravely three times round the sick man, saying the while, "On me be all that thou art suffering." His prayer was answered: he died, and Humayun reigned in his stead. Such is the noble close of the memoirs. They have their less pleasing aspects—a love of drinking, for example, as frank as Omar Khayyam's, and somewhat less coloured by poetry—but the final impression they leave is of a brave and chivalrous prince, a man of letters, and a true gentleman.

[1] "Bábar." By Stanley Lane-Poole, M.A., Professor of Arabic at Trinity College, Dublin. (Rulers of India Series.) Oxford: Clarendon Press.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

GRAPPLING WITH THE FAMINE.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, October 20.

There is no improvement in our agricultural prospects, and none is at present anticipated. Energy and efforts are now concentrated on the protection of the able-bodied plough-cattle, which are dying by hundreds for want of fodder. Meetings have been held in this city and in Ahmedabad to raise the necessary funds. The fountain of charity for this purpose is now open, and the stream is flowing in a satisfactory manner. This was, of course, to be expected from the benevolent spirit of the great *Bania* community. Their tenderness and regard for the dumb animals is well known, especially for animals like the bullock and the cow, which are more or less indispensable in their domestic economy.

A large public meeting is also about to be organised, at which either Lord Curzon—who is expected here about November 5—or Lord Sandhurst is likely to preside, to open a famine relief fund. I dare say the meeting will be a great success, and funds will flow in freely to supplement State

relief. The experience, however, of the relief operations during the last famine teaches us that, after all, the breaking up of the village system is most undesirable. Famine disperses the villagers in search of food. They undergo many privations; and the task-work to which the able-bodied are put is generally viewed with disfavour. There are folk who will starve and perish rather than go to such relief works. Again, stone-breaking and earthworks seem to be the stock kinds of labour. It is the general opinion that this kind of work has been over-done. It is slowly dawning upon the more thoughtful that what is essential under such a visitation as famine is to prevent the disintegration of the village, so far as may be, and employ the famished in some more useful work. But it is to be feared the difficulty lies in finding work of this character.

The number of cattle is steadily diminishing. Official statistics for the five years ending 1897-8 show that there is a diminution of about 20 per cent. in the strength of agricultural cattle, while the number of ploughs is smaller than before. If in 1893 there was one plough to every 22 acres of cropped area, in 1897 there was one to every 22½ acres. This is no inconsiderable deterioration. More even than the agricultural cattle, the number of young ones is decreasing. This is not a cheerful prospect. If the resources and implements of husbandry are contracted now, what may we expect when the present famine is over? The rayat has hardly recovered from the famine of 1897 when he finds himself overtaken by another visitation. This must prostrate him. The effects of such prostration may be easily imagined. In my opinion the effects of the present famine will be even more injurious than those of the last. The rayat will require more and more money to buy his seeds, his bullock, and his plough. This will add to his growing indebtedness, which must necessarily lead to greater pauperisation. What hope can there be under such conditions of ameliorating his circumstances? When we consider these matters we are driven to the root of the agrarian problem. But I have said enough on this subject in my last letter. It is much to be wished that far-sighted statesmanship may reign supreme in the Councils of the Empire and grapple with that problem in a masterly manner. There is no royal road to the redemption of the Indian peasantry from want and woe. The only road is clear, though strewn with difficulties. But the difficulties are the creation of the State landlord. It is in the power of those who originated them to remove them. In short, nothing but a radical change in the present land revenue system and land laws will bring the happy result we are all too anxious to witness.

The Viceroy is expected to descend from the breezy heights of Simla in another week. The higher Olympus will then be deserted. The deities who have held their court there for the last seven months are now hastening to their respective destinations. Some will be on the wing with the great Jupiter himself, while others will hie to the several missions to which they have been accredited. Christmas week will see them all reassembled in the metropolis. Meanwhile the Viceroy will visit some of the worst plague-stricken localities in this Presidency, and pay a flying visit to the famished district of Ahmedabad, and probably to Kathiawar. This is as it should be. Pageants and durbars, and other ceremonials, more befitting Chinese than English mandarins, are good in their way. Very few care for them. They do not mitigate the cares and sorrows of the starving millions. But a Viceregal visit to the famine districts serves at least one purpose. It inspires hope and confidence. The people get some concrete idea of the *Lat Saheb* who is the beneficent *Sirkar* and representative of the great white Queen-Empress. He may not do much. He may not be able to relieve their distress. Yet his presence has a soothing effect on the woe-begone people, and lulls them into a kind of patience which is indeed exemplary. If the Viceroy is chaperoned in the right way by the permanent bureaucracy it is not unlikely that, gifted as he is with sympathy and courage, he may realise to himself what an Indian famine really is and what are the distress and privations that millions of her Majesty's subjects have to endure. Lord Elgin was quite satisfied, when in December 1896, he travelled from Delhi to Calcutta in his saloon carriage, to see rain-clouds from his window. He thought the clouds indicated copious rain, and he deemed it inexpedient to visit the famine-stricken areas. He had merely a peep at the outskirts of the Jubbulpore district. Lord Curzon is of another temper and cast of mind. Let us hope that his visit to the famine tracts may be the harbinger of a brighter day for the impoverished rayat.

AN INDIAN ARTIST'S EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES.

[From Our Own Reporter.]

At the Imperial Institute on Monday last, under the auspices of the National Indian Association in Aid of Social Progress and Education in India, a lecture was given by Mr. Sasi Kumar Hesh, an artist from India, on "Artistic Experiences on the Continent and in England." Sir George M. Birdwood, K.C.I.E., occupied the Chair, and among those present were Sir James Linton, Sir Owen Burne, Mr. Martin Wood, and a large number of ladies, including the Honorary Secretary, Miss E. A. Manning. There was an unfortunate delay at the commencement of the proceedings owing to the non-arrival of Mr. Hesh and the pictures with which he proposed to illustrate his remarks. Mr. Hesh arrived just before five o'clock, meeting Sir George Birdwood as he was in the act of leaving the building. Sir George very kindly returned to the room and briefly introduced the lecturer, abstaining, however, from delivering the observations with which he had intended to preface the proceedings.

Dr. Mullick read the paper which had been prepared by Mr. Hesh. In this the author said he was unable to fix the time or circumstances which led him first to aspire to be an artist. He was born in a small village in one of the Eastern districts of Bengal, which had not in his boyhood been invaded by the accessories of Western civilisation, and he had thus no opportunity of seeing any good pictures in his early youth. But he came of an artistic stock, his father being a votary of music, and also a capable moulder of the clay figures of gods and goddesses who symbolised, in the popular religions of his country, different aspects of the Divine nature. This constituted his (Mr. Hesh's) original stock of artistic inheritance. From a boy he was very fond of nature, and where could they see nature in such grandeur and loveliness, in such varying moods, as in India? The autumn sky studded with stars or flooded with the silvery waves of the moon, the summer fields completely covered with water with dreamlike faint visions of the mountains far away, losing themselves in crowds of cloud-made peaks, the delicate dance of green stalks of corn keeping time with rippling waves below: the silent peeping of the morning sun, with its insidious beauties and its hidden ferocity; the soothing and seductive afterglow of the setting sun; the dense and solid gloom of starless nights resounding with the heavy and horrid cry of the Indian owls: all these presented Creation to him as a deep but inviting mystery. He loved it, not knowing how or why, but when a boy he used to draw it to his heart through uncouth efforts of his boyish pencil. His subjects were birds and flowers and plants, and he spoiled many a book that he was given to read by trying to reproduce on the printed pages the illustrations they contained. His education was of the most elementary kind: love of Nature, and outdoor sports, like angling, drew him away from his books, and owing to his parents not being rich people he had, with his meagre stock of knowledge, to take service as an Inspector of Primary Schools when he was still in his teens. For four years he served in that capacity. He never ceased, however, to draw or paint in his uninstructed way. Gradually he came to know of the Government School of Art in Calcutta, and notwithstanding the opposition of his parents, who never thought that any good could come of his devotion to painting, he gave up his situation, went to Calcutta, joined the School of Art, and studied there for a little over three years. It was there that his acquaintance with European art commenced. It was at first very wonderful to him how the grandeur and beauty of Nature could be reproduced so faithfully on canvas, or how the most complex sentiments of man could be interpreted by the brush or with the chisel. How he longed to master the Divine mystery! It was only a dream which, with his limited means and the immense wants of his large family, he could never think of realising. But though a dream it was, and impossible as its realisation seemed to be, it drew him on with what he sometimes felt as the cruel persistency of a relentless fate. For a whole year he had no rest, burning as he was with that intense desire. In the meantime he executed a few portraits, and, through the kindness of Providence, his work and his aspirations came to the notice of the leading zemindar of his native district, Mahárájá Surya Kanta Acharya, who most generously offered to defray all his expenses in Europe. Next to God, he owed whatever education and experience he had gained during his last three years' sojourn in Rome, Munich, Paris and London, to the enlightened patriotism and the generous patronage of the Mahárájá of Mymensingh. (Cheers.) There was no lack of natural artistic talent among the Indian people, and, if only promising youths received help and encouragement from the landed aristocracy and the feudatory princes of India such as it had been his privilege to receive, it would not be long before India took her proper position among the highest worshippers of the cult of beauty in this

age. (Hear, hear.) It was in the Eternal City of Rome that he spent the first twenty months of his pilgrimage—Rome, where the arts had reached their utmost perfection centuries ago and which still stood at the fountain head of the highest artistic inspiration. He arrived in Rome in August, 1896, and two months later entered the Royal Academy. The methods of teaching there he found were entirely different from those of the Calcutta School. At the latter institution the masters corrected mistakes but did not explain them. His Italian teachers pointed out and explained minutely and sometimes pitilessly all the student's mistakes and he could not overestimate his indebtedness to the kind care and the cruel criticisms of those teachers. For some months he had neither time nor inclination to visit the museums and galleries of that great city. But when at last he came in direct and almost personal contact with the work of the Old Masters he felt how glorious it was to realise in them the expression of that Divine humanity which struggled for self-revelation even through insignificant, ignorant, weak, and unimaginative individuals like themselves. It was a mystery how human hands could produce such marvellous works. Where did they find their sublime standard of beauty? How did they reach to their lofty ideal? Were the works of these great masters the products of the conventional in art? Were they the outcome of a conventionalism which worked regardless of nature? No. For the majesty of grandeur of earth and sky, or the exquisite perfection of form in man or brute, as well as the most delicate and secret, the most sacred and tender sentiments of the human heart which revealed themselves in those works, they must put themselves in direct and living contact with Nature, who alone could be the inspirer of their sublimest sentiments. She was the one true source of all real art and poetry, and at the same time she was the one and only infallible teacher. As soon as he learned that, the great veil of mystery that shrouded the works of the Ancient Masters dropped before his eyes, and he at once became a most ardent realist. He commenced to study life with increasing assiduity and vigour, and became scrupulously careful neither to overlook that which he saw in truth nor to miss the minutest detail in his model. He was fortunate at that period of his artistic life to work under very careful and able teachers, and the secret of their teaching was that the artist should be faithful to his own consciousness, and let his work declare that it was all that he knew. Mr. Hesh then went on at considerable length to describe what he saw and did in Rome, in Florence, in Genoa, in Paris, and in Munich. (Space, however, does not permit our quoting his interesting experiences at those places.) Dealing with his artistic experiences in London he said he was disappointed with the Royal Academy's last Summer Exhibition, of which he had heard so much while in India. Leaving aside Sarjent, Herkomer, Orchardson, John Collier, and one or two portraits by Shannon, the rest were scarcely worth noticing. Sarjent, however, of whom he heard a great deal on the Continent, came up to his highest expectations. He was a perfect master of his brush. For boldness, accuracy, and simplicity in treatment, for freshness and transparency in all colours, firmness and determination in touch, John Sarjent could fairly take his stand by such masters as Rembrandt and Velasquez. Some of Herkomer's portraits might class perhaps with those of Lenbach, but a great many of them seemed to him to be wanting in truth and colouring. In the Tate Gallery, the works of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Millais, and Leighton, impressed him as very masterly, and it was sad to think that no one as yet had come up to take their place in the art life of England. As for Watts he must confess to a sense of slight disappointment with him. His works, derived chiefly from ancient legend and poetry, were worthy of their subjects, being truly imaginative and highly sentimental, but his figures seemed to be hollow, lacking proper construction and revealing little anatomical background. England had sufficient reason to be proud of her National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery. In conclusion Mr. Hesh said—Modern Schools of Painting in Europe have achieved much that was wanting in the Old Masters. The highest perfection was attained in the reproduction of the form of the human body and their truest interpretation in contour by Holbein, Durer, Boticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, and others, but their relation to the world about them, the chromatical atmosphere in which they stood, had been altogether neglected. These two great limitations of the Old Masters have now been overcome by the leading artists in every European country. The chief characteristic of modern art is its intense realism. But this realism is a source of danger to modern art, and may hold before the public eye something simply disgusting and horrible. That the danger is real is evident in certain phrases of modern French art. I am not absolutely opposed to their nudity. Under certain conditions the Adamic costumes in art may be more conducive to religion and morality than the suggestive semi-nudities of civilised dress. The danger really lies, not in realism, but in the lack of an ideal, without which the real, whether in life or art, is meaningless and inane. In the age of the ancient Greek civilisation their ideal was physical perfection and beauty. With Christian civilisation came another influence which led the progress of the sublime art of painting. In the present age physical beauty and strength are no longer considered to be the highest ideals, whilst science has loosened the hold of the supernatural on the human mind which helped and perfected Christian art in the previous ages. The old Saints and Seraphs have been reduced to the proportion of ordinary mortals. Modern art needs a new ideal. Who will find it? (Cheers.)

The Chairman said the paper they had listened to with so much interest had shown Mr. Hesh in the light of a practical exponent of modern art; and it afforded another illustration of that which had been so often seen in recent years, namely the ability of the people of India to take their place in European art and science in competition with Europeans themselves. He was very glad to hear the protest which had been entered against realism. No doubt it was carried to excess nowadays, and he thought they could not too often remember that the duty of the artist was not merely to illustrate life but to render life illustrious. (Hear, hear.)

Some few remarks of a complimentary nature were also made by Mr. Pal, Sir Owen Burne, and Mr. Martin Wood; and the Chairman then tendered the hearty thanks of the meeting to Mr. Hesh for his lecture, taking the opportunity to offer, as a piece of friendly advice, the suggestion that he should study the art of keeping his sitters amused when engaged in painting their portraits. Mr. Hesh bowed his acknowledgments and the proceedings closed.

LABOUR EMIGRATION TO ASSAM.

IMPORTANT MEASURES.

[From the "Englishman."]

Simla, Oct. 13.

At the Viceroy's Legislative Council this morning in introducing the Bill to consolidate and amend the law in relation to emigration to labour districts in Assam the Hon. Mr. Rivaz said:—The law on this subject is contained in Act I of 1882 as amended by Act VII of 1893, and in the Bengal Sanitary Act I of 1889. I may explain at the outset that it is not proposed in the Bill to alter, or even touch except in one matter (of the minimum statutory wage, which we propose to raise) the labour system constituted by the present Act. This system rests on the basis of a penal contract enforceable through the Criminal Courts, and although it is recognised to be exceptional and transitory, and although the Government of India are pledged to revise or put an end to it when the conditions of Assam are assimilated to those of the neighbouring provinces, I have not come to undertake this. The railways now in course of construction should, we hope, very materially modify the conditions under which labour at present finds its way to the tea gardens. The labourer will be brought nearer his home and will be more disposed to spontaneously proceed to Assam in search of work, and will be better able to return home if work or pay fails to suit him. We shall be then under less obligation to assist the planter to return the labour which at present costs him much to import, and under less obligation to provide by rules for the well-being of the labourer. Meanwhile we have abundant testimony that the labour conditions of the present Act are working satisfactorily in Assam. We consider the minimum wages prescribed by the Act are now too low, regard being had to the rise in prices and the higher rates which labour commands outside Assam. But with this exception we are satisfied that the protection afforded by the Act to the labourer is sufficient, and will in all probability prove sufficient for the remaining term of existence of the present system.

Our proposed amendments of the present Act are, therefore, confined to its recruitment provisions. There is overwhelming evidence that, under the guise of "free emigration" from districts which supply labour to Assam, an organised system of professional recruiting has sprung up which is not distinguishable from the professional recruiting recognised, licensed and controlled by the Act, save that it is entirely free from control, and resorts with impunity to fraud, kidnapping, abduction of women and other malpractices. The Act provides in a very minute and careful manner for licensing contractors, recruiters, and granting certificates to garden sardars deputed from gardens to recruit. It requires that these agents shall bring the labourers that they have recruited before the registering officer in the district of recruitment, so that the labour contract following on the registration shall be similarly executed, and that the labourers, after the contract, shall be conveyed under the proper safeguards of official cognizance to Assam. But having provided this elaborate machinery for the protection of the labourer and for controlling the recruiter in recruiting districts, the Act was so worded as to authorise any other unlicensed or uncontrolled form of recruiting which the ingenuity of the labour purveyors could devise. The unlicensed recruiter, therefore, instead of registering and putting his recruits under the labour contract in Bengal, carried them off under no supervision to Assam, and there placed them under contract. This is what is called the free emigration system, and this system has given rise to abuses which necessitate the amendments of the law now proposed. The genuine free emigrant, who pays his own way to Assam and goes as a free agent to look for work, is obviously the man to be encouraged. But the genuine free emigrant is very seldom met with, and the great bulk of the labourers who proceed to Assam outside the precautions and safeguards of the Act are recruited and conveyed there by unlicensed recruiters, or contractors, or by garden sardars, with the express object of being put under penal contract on arrival in the labour districts. When the labour districts are reached the emigrant is far from home, amid unfamiliar surroundings, and has practically no option but to accept the contract which he is called upon to sign.

The only powers of control which the Government has over the free emigrants are those conferred by the Bengal Council Act of 1899, which enables the Bengal Government to prescribe the route by which the emigrants are to travel and to lay down rules for sanitary inspection and supervision over the depôts and rest-houses where they may stay on the way to Assam. But that Act is not in force in the Central Provinces or outside Lower Bengal.

It may be asked why, after having provided an elaborate procedure for recruiting and engaging emigrants under official supervision at or near their homes, and for transmitting them after execution of the contract to the labour districts, the Act of 1882 allowed or even invited recruitment to be carried on outside these provisions? The answer is that it was hoped that through State assisted emigration the goal of genuinely free emigration would be reached. This hope has not yet been realised. When Sir Philip Hutchins introduced in January, 1893, the Bill which subsequently became Act VII of that year, he stated that the Bengal Government had brought to notice the prevalence of abuses and malpractices committed by the professional recruiters under the "Free System", working without licence and outside the Act of 1882. He

drew attention to the unsatisfactory conditions as to sanitation under which emigrants travelled from their homes to the labour districts, and explained to the Government of India how he proposed to combat these evils. (1) By energetic executive action in the recruiting districts; (2) by constant and vigorous precautions along the line of march to Assam; (3) by strengthening the inspection system in the Assam tea gardens, and (4) by providing more complete remedies for the cancelment of contracts and the repatriation of emigrants whenever they were found to have been taken to Assam wrongfully. The provisions designed to give effect to these measures were accordingly included in the Bill Sir Steuart Bayley, when Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, had proposed, with a view to checking the abuses complained of before 1893: That all recruiting except by licensed recruiters should be disallowed, that all recruits should be registered and contracts executed in the districts of recruitment, and that no labourer should be permitted to enter into a penal contract in Assam until it had been proved that he had resided two years there. The Government of India thought at that time that as few complaints of crime ended in conviction, there could not be any serious amount of crime connected with recruitment in recruiting districts, that official interference which was not absolutely necessary would make emigration unpopular and be a retrograde step tending to discourage free emigration and retarding the day when all special legislation could be abandoned, and considered that the amendments of the law embodied in the Bill of 1893, combined with a vigorous enforcement of the ordinary criminal law and sanitary precautions for the protection of emigrants *en route*, would enable the local governments to put down any malpractices then complained of in recruiting districts.

While the Bill of 1893 was under consideration Sir Charles Elliott succeeded Sir Steuart Bayley as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. He hoped, without having recourse generally to the system of initial registration recommended by his predecessor, to be able to suppress the malpractices of free recruiters and agents with the aid of the powers conferred by the Act of 1893, coupled with a revision of rules under the Bengal Act I of 1889, and with other executive measures which he proposed to undertake. Sir Charles Elliott obtained and reviewed periodical returns showing the number of offences reported in connexion with the emigration from Bengal in which complaints by and against emigrants were distinguished. He drew up the revised rules under Act I of 1889, under which he proposed to bring professional recruiters under control by licensing them, but these rules were declared by the law official to be *ultra vires*. He had previously, as Chief Commissioner of Assam, opposed the Bengal Government proposals to put a stop to the so-called "free emigration" system, but having acquired experience of the working of that system in recruiting districts and his rules having been declared to be *ultra vires*, he keenly felt the abuses that had sprung up round the system of free emigration. "The sham free emigration," he wrote, "was used in a non-natural sense; it depended upon the machinery of the recruiters, sardars, contractors and local agents who, however carefully they might be watched, could not be controlled by the executive."

He acknowledged that there were innumerable complaints of fraud and violence connected with the system, and at the request of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce appointed a Commission to enquire into the whole subject. He trusted the Commission would be able to arrange for the formation of a central recruiting agency in Calcutta, which would undertake the entire business of supplying labour in Assam at a reduced cost, and without the abuses that attended the existing system. The Commission consisted of Mr. Williams, C.S., who had served in Assam for many years and afterwards as Collector and Commissioner in the recruiting districts of Bengal; Dr. Comins, formerly Superintendent of Emigration and Protector of Emigrants for Bengal; Messrs. Begg and Gladstone, representatives of the Indian Tea Association; and a Native gentleman, Kumar Dakhieswaer Malia. From its constitution it is apparent that the Commission was in no way biassed against the so-called "free" emigration system or in favour of the system of initial registration of emigrants and verifications of contracts in the recruiting districts. Yet, after visiting the recruiting districts, they have unanimously reported that the formation of a central agency was impracticable, and that malpractices had increased since the passing of the Act of 1893, that without alteration of the law it was impossible for the Executive Government to stop them, and that the cost of importing labour into Assam was steadily increasing owing to the abuses arising from the competition of unlicensed and professional recruiters. The evidence adduced in the Commission's and Local Officers' reports are in support of the Commission's conclusions. These points appear to Government to be full and conclusive. The Commission has made certain recommendations for adoption of measures to check the abuses, and the Government of Bengal (Sir Alexander Mackenzie) have accepted generally their recommendations, and commended them for adoption to the Government of India.

The Commission's report with the Bengal Government's comments was circulated for criticism to all the local Governments and Administrations concerned, with the result that they all agree substantially to the amendments in the law we now propose. These are (1) We empower the local Government to prohibit all persons from recruiting, engaging, or assisting any Native of India to emigrate from any specified part of its territories to any or all labour districts otherwise than in accordance with the provisions of the Act. When such notification issues it will completely stop the present unlicensed and uncontrolled system of free recruiting, by making it punishable as a criminal offence. (2) Having brought the present unlicensed contractors and recruiters under license and control, we further require that they shall register the emigrant in the district in which he has been actually recruited before a responsible officer, and they shall subsequently enter into a labour contract with the registered emigrant, if not in the actual district of recruitment, at least at some central place near such district. We do away with the special procedure under which a labour contract for any district in the Assam Valley can at present be entered into by the so-called "free emigrant" at Dhubri. (3) We provide for an interval of at least three days between the registration of the intending emigrants and the execution of the contracts by them. (4) We make additional provisions for repatriating labourers found to have been enticed away from their homes by fraud, or forced away by violence, or rejected by the registering officer. (5) We prohibit the execution of a penal contract by a woman without the consent of her husband or lawful guardian. (6) We provide that medical examination of labourers intending to proceed to the labour districts on the point of physical fitness to labour be made compulsory in recruiting districts in the case of contractors' coolies, and optional in the case of sardars' recruits. (7) We provide that when a labourer is convicted of desertion he shall not be liable to be detained or returned to the garden he left for any period beyond the last day of the contract he broke by desertion. (8) We raise the minimum contract wage as prescribed by the present law from Rs. 5 in the case of a man, and Rs. 4 of a woman, to Rs. 6 and Rs. 5, respectively. (9) We also make minor alterations as to the amounts of license-fees payable by the contractors, sub-contractors, or recruiters. (10) In addition to these we are separately proposing that the Bengal Act I of 1889 relative to the sanitary control over arrangements for free emigrants *en route* to Assam be converted into an act of the Government of India, and be made extendible to the Central and North-Western Provinces and any other province from which labourers may be recruited in future, and that its scope be enlarged so as to give the local Governments power to frame rules to give their officers definite powers of entry and inspection of depôts or rest-houses for other than sanitary purposes.

There are certain exceptions under amendments (1) and (2) with regard to licensing recruiters and the registration of emigrants and the execution of contracts by them in recruiting districts, which I shall now specify. (*a*) There is a certain amount of really spontaneous or free emigration to the Surma Valley. This it is not proposed to interfere with under the Bill. The Bill does not empower the local Government to prohibit persons from going without assistance and of their own accord to any part of Assam. The Bill further leaves it at the discretion of the local Government to prohibit or not prohibit "assisted" emigration outside the Act. It is conceivable for instance that "assisted" emigration to the Surma Valley has not the objectionable features which attend "assisted" emigration to the Brahmaputra Valley. (*b*) Recruitment carried on by uncertificated garden sardars has not been abused, and it is desirable to encourage it. These sardars are servants deputed by individual planters from gardens in Assam to the recruiting districts to bring up coolies to that planter's particular garden. It is proposed to subject them to a certain amount of control, but the coolies need not be brought before the registering officers to be registered, nor need contracts between planters and coolies recruited by them be executed in or near the recruiting districts. Concessions made to these uncertificated garden-sardars can be withdrawn at any time if abused.

It is proposed to make similar concessions to approved associations or companies, such as the proposed Central Recruiting Agency, should it ever be formed. There is no immediate prospect, so far as Government are at present aware, of the formation of a central agency which would undertake the whole business of recruiting labour for Assam; because all the planters are not willing to combine and join such an agency, and unless all do agree to join, it would not be right to give any agency a monopoly, thus compelling dissentients to join it; but even if such an agency were formed, the necessity for the proposed amendments in the law would not be thereby obviated. To give any agency a monopoly in recruiting it is necessary to have the legal power of preventing recruiting by others, which power does not exist under the present law. Should the proposed central agency be formed later on, and should it be found desirable to give it a monopoly in recruiting, that object can be effected under the Bill by giving licenses to recruiters and to no others, while, should any number of planters short of the total number combine and form an agency among themselves, their sardars can be given the same concessions as uncertificated garden sardars have under the Bill, leaving others to make their own arrangements, provided they are consistent with the law.

It is unnecessary that I should at this stage enter into an elaborate discussion on, or justification of the various amendments which have been described; it will be sufficient for me to say that most of them are on the lines recommended by the Labour Commission, and all have been accepted as necessary and adequate to put down the abuses in recruiting districts by the local Governments concerned. The Indian Tea Association have also expressed approval of the principal amendments in the law now proposed.

To return now to one matter in respect of which we propose to modify the labour conditions of the present Act. We propose to raise the minimum contract wage from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per month in the case of a man, and from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 in the case of a woman. May I observe that the Bengal Labour Commission, on which the tea interests are represented by Messrs. Begg and Gladstone, acknowledged in paragraph 81 of their report that if Government would insist on the reduction of the cost of importing labour to Assam, which reduction they anticipated would be one of the results of adopting their recommendations, they would be fairly entitled to demand some increase in the pay of coolies. A proposal to raise the minimum wage has been pressed upon us by the local Governments of Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, and by the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces and Assam. The present statutory wage was fixed more than 34 years ago, when ordinary wages and labour in recruiting districts were lower, and the demand for labourers in Assam less than now, and it is clear, therefore, that a wage which was then sufficient to induce emigrants to proceed voluntarily to Assam is inadequate now. It has been argued in some quarters that insomuch as labourers can, by working overtime, earn more than the contract wage, it is unnecessary to raise it; but this argument ignores the fact that labourers could also earn extra wages by working overtime in 1865, when the minimum wage was fixed, as well as now. Amendments relating to the initial registration of intending emigrants and verification of contracts to recruiting districts, to licensing all professional

recruiters, to the medical examination of labourers in recruiting districts, repatriation of labourers and their dependents, and the prohibition of the execution of contracts by females without the consent of their husbands or guardians, have all been accepted by the local Governments concerned and are explained in the papers which will be circulated, and I need not occupy your time in considering them now.

In conclusion, I may repeat it has always been the desire and policy of the Government to dispense with all special legislation relating to recruitment of labour for Assam. We still adhere to that policy. We hope that some time after communication to Assam by rail is opened up by the completion of the Assam-Bengal Railway it may be possible to do away altogether with the system of penal contracts, or make substantial changes in the Assam labour system in the direction of abolishing such contracts. For the present it is necessary to maintain the system, and while it is maintained we trust that the changes in the law now proposed will have the effect of stopping the abuses of recruitment, while cheapening the cost of importing labour to the tea districts. We have thought it desirable to consolidate, as well as amend, the labour law, so as to make it the more easily intelligible, and to make the Bengal Sanitary Act I of 1889 extendible to other recruiting provinces. These Bills will be circulated for criticism, and it is proposed to pass them during the coming session at Calcutta.

The Bill was introduced.

Mr. Rivaz then said: I beg to introduce a Bill to make better provision for the health, supervision and control of emigrants proceeding to or from the labour districts of Assam. This Bill is a corollary to the amendments we propose to make in the recruitment provisions of the Assam Labour Emigration Act, and in introducing a Bill for the latter object I have explained that we propose to supplement its revised provisions by enacting as a general Act the Bengal Inland Emigrants Health Act. The local governments of the several provinces in which recruiting for Assam is carried on will thus have the same means of guarding the health of recruits in transit to Assam as the Bengal Government at present have. It is proved by experience that such powers are required.

THE CONGRESS AT LUCKNOW.

THE DELEGATE OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

We understand that Miss Alison Garland, who is about to visit India in order to study Indian questions—political and social—on the spot, has been appointed the delegate of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress to the Congress which assembles at Lucknow at the end of December. Miss Garland, who has been for some years one of the most successful lecturers on behalf of the British Committee, will leave London on November 21.

Miss Alison Garland is well known in England as one of the ablest and most popular of political lecturers. She has done excellent service in educating women in political matters. As Organising Secretary to the Countess of Carlisle, and later to the Women's Liberal Federation, she formed eighty of the Women's Liberal Associations in England. Miss Garland is the President of the Devon Union, which includes the seventy-two Women's Liberal Associations in that county. She gave up organising in order to devote herself entirely to lecturing, and for the last six years she has addressed meetings in all parts of the country, almost nightly throughout the winter. She is on the lecture staff of such well-known societies as the National Reform Union, the Women's Liberal Federation, the Armenian Society, the Aborigines Protection Society, the United Kingdom Alliance, the Anti-Vivisection Society, and the Bimetallic League. Miss Garland studied Indian finance four years ago when giving seventy or eighty lectures on the Currency question. She is said to be the most lucid exponent of this difficult subject, and she is the only lady lecturer on it in Europe.

It was in 1897 that Miss Garland first lectured on behalf of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. She addressed in that winter (1897-98) over forty meetings on the "Forward Policy." To make that policy clear to her audiences, she drew a very large map showing the passes, rivers, fortifications, etc., of the north-western frontier, and demonstrating clearly the enormous difficulties to be encountered by an invader, and the delusion of the "scientific frontier" as a good military defence. An amusing story will show the respect entertained by business men in Lancashire for Miss Garland's knowledge of Indian questions. There is at Manchester a debate held from 2 to 5 every Tuesday and Friday, at the County Forum. This debate is attended by eighty to a hundred "city men" after "high change" is over at the Royal Exchange. Miss Garland is the only lady speaker who is invited to take part in these debates upon visiting Manchester. She has taken a variety of subjects, amongst them being "Can Russia Invade India?" On March 18, last year, she was passing through Market Street, and saw on the placard outside the County Forum—"Subject of Debate: Lord Roberts's Speech in the House of Lords on the Forward Policy in India." "Opener, Mr. ———." Miss Garland recognised the name as that of a Conservative and an old army man, who warmly endorsed the "forward" movement beyond the frontier. She strolled in and took a seat beside the door; but no sooner was her appearance noticed than loud cheers were given by the Radical members, and the debater, who had on former occasions crossed swords with Miss Garland on this question, grew confused, lost the thread of his discourse, and collapsed in five minutes. It was not so easy to discuss in a general way military resources and defences when he knew that every fact and figure might be challenged by Miss Garland, who has all the details given in Col. Hanna's books at her finger-ends. Loud calls were given for the lady to continue the debate. Preferring to wait till nearer the end, that she might have more opponents to reply to, she did not respond; but no opponents arose, and at length several gentlemen on her side of the question continued the discussion. At the end of the second hour Miss Garland replied with a trenchant criticism of Lord Roberts's speech, and then left the room. No sooner had she gone than many sturdy Russophobists sprang to their feet and kept "the house" till the hour for closing arrived. But it was significant that all kept quiet till the "expert" was no longer there to reply.

Last winter, out of the one hundred and fifty meetings addressed by Miss Garland, no fewer than seventy-two were on Indian subjects. During the last seven weeks she has spoken much on the Transvaal question, when she has taken *seriatim*, the grievances of the Outlanders in the Transvaal and compared them with the much weightier grievances suffered by British Indian subjects in a country ruled by freedom-loving England.

As Miss Garland had a great desire to visit India that she might speak in future of what she had seen and heard for herself, the British Committee thought it well to send her as their delegate to the Congress, that the Indian delegates might hear one of their warmest English supporters, and so be more able to judge of the kind of work done by the Committee in England in sending such speakers throughout the country to educate public opinion on Indian matters. Miss Garland has had a splendid "send-off" from many large meetings, addressed by her in England this autumn. A keen desire to know more about the Indian Congress that is taking away one of their most useful speakers from England for five months is manifested in numerous political clubs and associations in the North and South of England and already many promises have been made to arrange meetings for her on her return to hear about the Lucknow Congress and its doings.

In India Miss Garland hopes to visit Bombay, Poona, Rajputana, Delhi, Agra, Benares, Cawnpore, Calcutta, Darjeeling, and Madras. She will probably stay in the country till the middle of March.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

PETITION OF BOMBAY CITIZENS.

The following petition has been forwarded to the Viceroy of India by certain "undersigned inhabitants of Bombay":—

May it Please Your Excellency,

Your Excellency's humble petitioners, the inhabitants of Bombay, at a public meeting assembled on the 17th day of October, under the presidency of Nawabzada Nasrullahkhan, barrister-at-law, most respectfully crave leave to approach your Excellency with the following prayers:

1. That the dire calamity of famine having overtaken India, Your Excellency's petitioners, as loyal subjects, venture to suggest the following measures, and most humbly submit them for the favourable consideration of Your Excellency, and pray that, taking the urgency of the occasion into consideration, all or some of them as it may be deemed needful, may be adopted and acted upon during the continuance of the present famine.

(*a*) The export from India to the foreign countries of food-stuffs, both for human beings and cattle, may be entirely prohibited, or if that measure cannot be carried out prohibitive export duty may be imposed on such exports.

(*b*) In order to encourage and induce the import of articles of food into India import duty may be abolished, and as further encouragement to offer for sale such imports at cheaper rates the importers may be given bounty, the amount of which your petitioners crave permission to leave to the better judgment of Your Excellency.

(*c*) Railway freight on grain and fodder within India may be reduced to such an extent as it may appear to Your Excellency desirable to meet this emergency.

(*d*) The town or the excise duty wherever levied on the transit of grain and fodder in India and Burma may be abolished, provided such articles are required for the famine-stricken parts only.

(*e*) The owners of coasting steamers may be induced to carry food-stuffs both for human beings and cattle to and from Indian and Burman ports at cheaper rates than at present by granting them such compensation as it may appear to Your Excellency suitable.

(*f*) Some measures may be adopted for stopping speculation in grain.

2. That as preventives against the future recurrences of famines Your Excellency's petitioners most humbly beg to suggest the following measures for favourable consideration:

(1) Agricultural banks may be opened for rendering financial assistance to the poor agriculturists in India.

(2) Opening of canals both for the purposes of irrigation and navigation throughout India may be more favourably countenanced.

(3) The land revenue may be permanently settled.

3. That Your Excellency's petitioners do not desire to enter into any discussion or adduce arguments in support of the above suggestions because they honestly believe that Your Excellency is sincerely desirous of saving the lives and

ameliorating the conditions of the millions of her most gracious Majesty's Indian subjects entrusted under Providence to Your Excellency's care; and that Your Excellency will be pleased to take the above-mentioned suggestions into favourable consideration, and after due and careful enquiry will be graciously pleased to give effect to those of them that may appear most suitable.

And Your Excellency's petitioners and the millions throughout the whole of India, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

Dated at Bombay, October 17, 1899.

THE RANGOON OUTRAGE.

The Viceroy in Council has at last taken up the abominable outrage perpetrated by about a dozen British soldiers in the presence of between thirty and forty of their corps at Rangoon. He finds it "revolting," as all the world has done; he regards it with "profound horror and repugnance"; and he thinks it "scarcely less regrettable that the efforts which were made to detect and to punish the offenders by the processes of military and civil enquiry should have resulted in complete failure." Still, the incident must not be exaggerated. "It has been reprobated by the entire service;" "it reflects only the unthinking passions of a few, and not the disposition of the mass." We hope so; but this is not quite the whole matter. Anyhow, what is to be done? The Commander-in-Chief apparently has removed from the Army all the non-commissioned officers and men concerned in the atrocious business. So far, good. But we should just like to know what has become of the ruffians, and to be quite sure that they will not find their way into the Army again elsewhere and under other names; and we should be glad to know that Indian and British society alike were rid of them for good. The case of the military and civil officers to whose apathy and neglect—not to put it higher—the failure of justice was due, is pending; the War Office here has to be consulted with regard to some of the military officers, and we suppose that the final judgment on all will be announced at the same time. We must still wait therefore. We must also wait for the decision of the Home Department of the Government of India on the civil officers inculpated; all we yet learn is that their conduct is "the subject of official action." Frankly, we have little hope in the matter. Lord Curzon has not spoken a whit more strongly than, if even so plainly and strongly as Lord Lytton did in his celebrated Fuller minute; and the Fuller minute has long been practically a dead letter. The fact is that there is no cure for these atrocities unless the mischief be extirpated root as well as branch. It is not a peculiarly military mischief; the special military characteristics only give it more scope and bring it out more glaringly. The malignant root lies in the habitual Anglo-Indian attitude of mind towards the Indians. There is the point of the whole matter. If this intolerable system of unprovoked outrage upon Indians is to be put down, Lord Curzon must take stringent measures to communicate his own gentlemanly feeling to his compatriots in India. There is one rule, and one alone: treat every Indian exactly as if he were an Englishmen. The cure looks a particularly simple one, yet in practice it is difficult exceedingly. The domineering spirit of the Englishman assumes free scope amidst an inoffensive and submissive population, whose standard of conduct is not brute force, but gentleness and politeness. Can the leopard change his spots? Unhappily, no. So we can hope for nothing more than a temporary patching of this dangerous sore. In some places, indeed, there are indications of a spirit that will assist in inducing amelioration. Natives are now occasionally plucking up courage to hale a British insulter before a magistrate. We hope this spirit will gather strength, and that the local examples will spread. It is a pitiable state of things, in all conscience; but, we dare say, there is no getting away from it so long as Englishmen are bred between the Atlantic and the North Seas. It is a weak side of British strength, and a deplorable weakness it is.—The *New Age*.

THE TROOPS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

Lord Lansdowne has formally intimated, through the Secretary of State for India, the warm congratulations of her Majesty's Government on the admirable manner in which the recent embarkation of troops for South Africa has been arranged by the authorities in India. It may be remarked that the prompt way in which the Indian contingent was despatched is practically due to the perfection of the mobilisation scheme which is in force in India, and that had more ample dock accommodation and shipping been available the troops would probably have been moved several days earlier. The Government of India may at all events be congratulated on not only having its army equipment in excellent readiness, but also having practically saved the situation in South Africa.

A telegram has been received from the Adjutant-General in India stating that the Commander-in-Chief congratulates Sir Robert Low, commanding the Forces, Bombay, upon the expeditious and satisfactory arrangements made for the despatch of the Indian contingent for South Africa. His Excellency also desired that his special thanks should be conveyed to the General Officer commanding the Bombay District. By direction of Sir Robert Low the Deputy Adjutant-General, Bombay Command, has written to say that Sir Robert has noted with great pleasure the zeal and energy which Colonel Stevens and his staff officers—Major Triscott, Captain Aitken, Captain England, Captain Cartwright, the P. M. O., and the head of the Commissariat Department—have devoted to the work of embarking the troops and desiring that his appreciation of the extremely satisfactory manner in which the embarkation had been carried out might be conveyed to all concerned.

An estimate which may be taken as fairly correct calculates the cost of sending the Indian Contingent to South Africa at about half a million sterling. This, of course, will be borne by the Home Exchequer.

A PLUCKY BENGALI WOMAN.

A correspondent writes to the *Englishman*:—The charming description of the "Sporting adventures of a Memsahib" by "Maga," which appeared in your issue of Friday last, recalls to my mind an incident almost equally thrilling, which happened a few days ago in the jungles near Gidhour in Jammœ Subdivision. This was of a case of a Native woman's encounter with a full-grown man-eating tiger, in which she was not merely a vigilant and sympathetic spectator, but herself engaged in the scuffle with the huge beast, whom she made deliver its unhappy victim, and thus mainly instrumental in saving the life of her husband for the time. As an instanse of what even a plain country woman can do, when thus suddenly confronted with dangers of such magnitude, and at a moment when the anxiety for the safety of her friends and relatives so completely fills her soul as to overcome all other feelings, it may be read with interest by many of your readers. The husband of the woman, who is a goala by caste, is a resident of the village of Dunner Kola, not very far from Gidhour. He went as usual to cut wood in the neighbouring jungle, accompanied by his wife. They set themselves to their work for some time, when, to their intense horror, they discovered a full-sized Bengal tiger coming up from behind the trees meditating a charge on them with all its fury. In an instant the beast fell upon the man, and was on the point of dragging him away by his shoulder when the wife, as if armed with a superhuman courage, frantically endeavoured to pull him free by getting hold of his legs. This mode of resistance, however, proved ineffectual, and he feebly requested his wife to rescue him from its cruel grasp by belabouring it with a stick or any weapon. The wife, thereupon, firmly caught hold of an axe which lay near by, and so violently dealt three successive blows on the head of the animal that it had to leave its prey and straight made away into the depth of the jungle, instead of directing its attack on its new assailant. This daring act has generally elicited applause and admiration in this part of the Province, but I regret to learn that her husband was so severely mauled by the tiger that there is no likelihood of his recovery. The man is at present reported to be lying in a precarious condition in the charitable dispensary at Jammœ.

INDIAN LAW STUDENTS IN ENGLAND.

The following are included in the List of Awards of the Council of Legal Education upon the Michaelmas pass examination held in Gray's Inn Hall, October 17, 18 and 19.

PASS CERTIFICATES.—Pratap C. Dutt and Lal C. Mehra (Lincoln's Inn); Mohamed Arabi and Mirza M. Zooleadur Beg (Middle Temple); Hemanta K. Basu, Trimbakrai Desai and Bhai G. Singh (Gray's Inn).

PASS IN ROMAN LAW ONLY.—Atul K. Bose, Abdul M. Khan and Hirabhai M. Mehta (Lincoln's Inn); Ebrahim M. Patail (Middle Temple); Kasi P. Basu, Ratan Chand, Mohing M. Chuckerbutty, Khrishnarao B. Dwatia, Sarat S. Mukerji, Baddipalli Nagappa, Sital Parshad, Ditta Tekoo Ram, Dara S. Sethna and Rachhpal Singh (Gray's Inn).

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AND LEGAL HISTORY ONLY.—Mathurbhai P. Amin, Ramani K. Doss, Syed A. Iman, Indrajit Kalabhai and Raghunath S. Pandit (Lincoln's Inn).

ROMAN LAW AND CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, AND LEGAL HISTORY.—Maulvi S. Ahmed and Gyan Singh (Gray's Inn).

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

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At Guisborough, Yorkshire, a public meeting was addressed by Miss Alison Garland on "India and its People," on November 1. Mr. Wright, J.P., presided over an audience of about two hundred and thirty people. The lecture was illustrated by limelight views.

Meetings have been held during this week at Aspatria, Maryport and Cockermouth.

Among other prospective meetings which will be addressed on behalf of the British Committee are the following:—

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,, 14.—Sheffield.
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